

The Center for Victims of Torture Warns About Significance of Rittenhouse Verdict

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The Center for Victims of Torture™ (CVT) today issued this statement in response to the acquittal of Kyle Rittenhouse, who stood trial for murder in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

“For more than 30 years, our clients have been telling CVT grim details of what took place in their home countries before they were tortured and forced to flee. They come to our centers for rehabilitative care and begin the work of rebuilding their sense of self, their connections to other human beings, and new lives with some possibility of hope. As part of this process, they describe what they experienced as systems within their countries that weaponized violence to persecute, silence and create fear.

“The acquittal of a young man who brandished a military-style assault rifle, and shot dead protestors he presumed to be supporting the Black Lives Matter movement, should remind us that the justice system is an extension of the policing system in the United States.

“This verdict illustrates an ugly truth: that the same system that has permitted police officers to kill Black people with few legal consequences has failed to hold accountable a young man who appointed himself as an armed enforcer of the law and killed unarmed protesters. Clients from countries that are notorious for violating human rights are profoundly familiar with these patterns of behavior.

“When the justice system exonerates those who engage in deadly vigilantism and identity-based violence, it is creating a climate of impunity that endangers the human rights of all Americans.”
-Simon Adams, Ph.D., CVT president and CEO

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The Center for Victims of Torture is a nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Paul, MN, with offices in Atlanta, GA, and Washington, D.C.; as well as in Africa and the Middle East. Visit www.cvt.org